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To fully appreciate Georgia, bear in mind that these pages are merely illustrative. They highlight some of the state's opportunities for the traveler whose interest in African-American heritage is coupled with an interest in fine food, excitement, relaxation and family fun. They are meant to inform and to whet the appetite.

For a fuller sense of the state's wide-ranging bounty, call the Georgia Department of Tourism [(404) 656-3590] or the convention & visitors bureaus of the principal cities in the state. Their telephone numbers and addresses, like those of all the sites mentioned in the pages that follow, can be found in "Georgia Attractions" at the end of this special supplement.

Cover: The work of Georgia artist Michele L. Wood can be found in Atlanta at the Level 2 Gallery.

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American Visions

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CONSUMING PLEASURES

by Henry Chase

Courtesy Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games

Kickin' out the jams in Atlanta: the Soweto Street Beat Dance Company of Celebrate Africa!

Arts' Borders

Atlanta's biennial **National Black Arts Festival** (NBAF) does more than slam you back in your seat, leaving you stunned by the diaspora's artistic creativity and thrilled to witness the talents of the African guest artists on view. It also serves art's true purpose: enlightenment and catharsis.

"Art heals," says NBAF's managing director, James Borders. "It speaks the truth about ourselves and the world. The festival is an opportunity to see ourselves at our best and confront ourselves at our worst.

"We are the largest African-American cultural event in the country and also a major gathering for some of the freshest talent in music and dance from the African continent," continues the man responsible for marshaling a 10-day festival that's packed with 150 events that cover dance, film, literature, music, theater, and folk, performance and visual arts.

"The festival is a matter of old-time race pride. Our gifts are on view. We're inspirational to our people. The African-American community sees our work not just as decorative or entertaining, but rather as something approaching the essence of life.

"The other thing is: We have flat-out fun here. We're a homecoming, a reunion."

Borders is convinced that Atlanta is just about perfect for an African-American reunion that cel-

ebrates black culture while reaching out to the wider world: "All the ingredients are in place for Atlanta to become one of the crucial cultural centers of the 1990s. It has a growing ethnic diversity—the city is attracting people from all over the U.S. and from outside the country. It has a stable non-arts economy and a strong transport system to ease people into the downtown area. And it has a sizeable arts-culture community, whose institutional leadership is changing—with new ideas, energy, ambitions and people emerging."

This new energy and these new ideas promise that Atlanta's sizzle will remain *hot,* for, as Borders notes, "We've just scratched the surface of what we can be and do as a community of people of African descent."

It's impossible to convey the full range of NBAF events in this space, so take what follows as a sampler: Ruth Brown, Abbey Lincoln, Cassandra Wilson, the Roots and Branches Folk Festival and Celebrate Africa! (including Compagnie Ébène, the Soweto Street Beat Dance Company, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, Youssou N'Dour and Friends, Ensemble Koteba theater company and other African troupes), a show of French West Indies painters at the gallery of the Georgia Council for the Arts, Atlanta's Ballethnic Dance Company and the Nuyorican Poets. The time: July 29 through August 7, 1994. For further details, call (404) 730-7315.

The Black Arts of Hammonds

Hammonds House, Atlanta's sole museum dedicated to the work of artists from the African diaspora, is definitely major-league. We're not talking here about your local black arts center or simply a building with some paintings hanging on the walls. Far from it: Hammonds is home to more than 250 major works by artists who will stand time's test.

Hammonds has the oldest datable painting by Robert S. Duncanson, the mid-19th-century landscape artist valued for his attempt to frame the American frontier in a classical perspective and the first black painter to achieve national recognition.

Hammonds has the work of P.H. Polk, Booker T. Washington's official photographer, who documented on film the Southern rural black experience in greater detail than anyone in the 20th century, earning the reputation of being the "James Van Der Zee of the South." (Oh, did we mention that Van Der Zee's work is also at Hammonds?)

Hammonds has Hale Woodruff, the master muralist of "The Amistad Incident" and "Art of the Negro." Employing a muscular and energetic brush, Woodruff placed narrative at the core of his work. His subject matter was always the black experience, from the heroism of the African captives aboard the *Amistad* to the endurance of Georgia's rural African Americans mired in squalid shantytowns.

Hammonds has Elizabeth Catlett, whose accomplishments have been etched largely against the grain of the mainstream American art world. Catlett studied drawing under James Porter and design under Lois Mailou Jones at Howard University and painting under Grant Wood at the State University of Iowa. Her work is fueled by a sharp political sense of injustice, a sense born as a black woman in the Depression and intensified during a residence in Mexico that began in 1946 and continues to this day.

Hammonds also has Romare Bearden, who is represented by several of his later collages and lithographs; Wadsworth Jarrell, cofounder of the Africobra (African Communion of Bad Relevant Artists) aesthetic; Sam Gilliam; Benny Andrews; Richard Hunt; William H. Johnson; and Louis Delsarte—all of whom have carved out careers that will carry their works securely beyond their lives.

Hammonds is home to more than a score of Haitian works, some by well-known, trained artists, such as Wilson Bigaud and Laurent Casmir, and some by untrained exemplars of primitivism, such as Camy Rocher, LaFortune Felix and Robert St. Brice. Hammonds is also home to a collection of African masks and sculpture and to a half dozen annual exhibitions of mid-career and mature black artists.

Courtesy Hammonds House

Bearden's "Girl in Garden" graces Hammonds House.

If you're in Atlanta, you're in the hometown of one of the true pinnacles of African-American art. At Hammonds, you're witness to work that will endure to your grandchildren's grandchildren—and beyond.

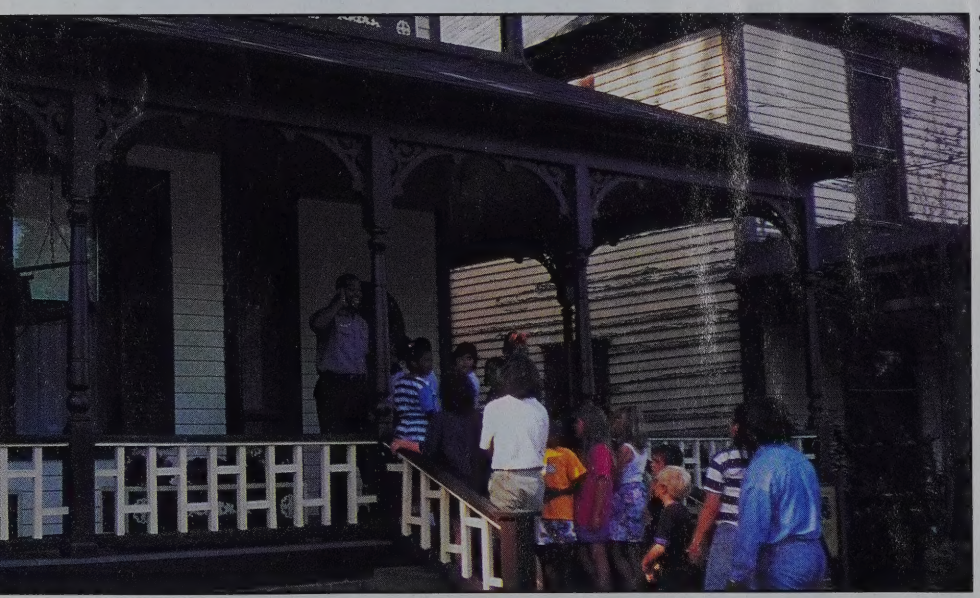
Dr. King

On January 15, 1929, a nine-room, two-story house presided over by the pastor of Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church echoed with the first cries of a child whose voice would later be heard around the world. It was an apt birthplace for the "young M.L.," as the child was commonly called. The son and grandson of preachers, Martin Luther King Jr. was born in, was nurtured by, and died in the black church, historically the principal outlet for expression of the African-American people.

Neither the most brilliant strategist nor the most able organizer of the black struggle, Dr. King was far more than simply the most eloquent civil rights spokesman of his time. Rather, he conveyed and inspired in others the moral passion of the campaign for social justice, the demand that America recognize and realize its better self. King shared with John Winthrop and the Puritan divines—America's founding ideologues—the view that America's purpose was to redeem itself and the world, to be "a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people ... upon us." Nothing less would suffice either for America or for the man whose life was his sermon.

Today, visitors to the **Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site** view Dr. King's final resting place and tour three buildings: a museum and research center that preserves and advances King's legacy and vision; the Ebenezer Baptist Church, center of the young King's faith; and the martyr's Birth Home, which has been restored to its appearance during the years 1929 to 1941—years when the young M.L. played in its rooms (and hid from its chores), unaware that he had a destiny and an appointment in Memphis from which he would not run.

The Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site is Georgia's most popular attraction for visitors, each of whom will find his or her own meaning in a life whose force and purpose abide.



Courtesy Ga.ITT

Visitors line up to enter Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birth Home.

Atlanta

Hawks and Falcons soar; Braves rampage through the league. CNN's headquarters brings you the story from around the world as it happens. U.S. Representative John Lewis, former mayors Andrew Young and Maynard Jackson, and current mayor Bill Campbell walk the streets—and help run the show! The Atlanta University Center unites the energies of six of the country's most important historically black colleges. Delta Air Lines calls the city home. And the 1996 Summer Olympics approach—confirming Atlanta's emergence not only as a regional powerhouse, but as a true international metropolis. Its nightlife rivals Berlin's, its museums take pride of place with New York's, the breadth of its ethnic makeup begins to challenge Toronto's—and the welcoming warmth of its people leaves other cities floundering in its wake. Atlanta is where America is heading—on America's better days.

POINTERS

APEX, the African-American Panoramic Experience, celebrates Atlanta's local black heritage with audiovisual presentations, displays of artifacts and art exhibits. At the center of this celebration is "Sweet Auburn," in its heyday, Atlanta's main black artery and home to churches, banks, a business college, a newspaper, businesses and Martin Luther King Jr.

The brand new **Auburn Avenue Research Library on African-American Culture and History** is APEX's next-door neighbor and offers visitors an in-depth look at the black experience. Atlanta, as the cradle of the civil rights movement, figures prominently at the library, whose other highlights in-

Courtesy Ballethnic Dance Company

Ballethnic Dance Company entertains and enlightens Atlanta.

clude microfilmed collections of SNCC files, the FBI files maintained on Dr. King, the papers and memorabilia of George Washington Carver, 14,000 documents related to the abolitionist movement, photographs and letters of the baseball stars of the Negro League and 20,000 reference works.

The **Herndon Home** offers an insightful look into the life of early-20th-century Atlanta's wealthiest black family, whose head was a participant in the founding meeting of W.E.B. Du Bois' Niagara Movement and also a supporter of Booker T. Washington's National Negro Business League.

The **Atlanta History Center** regularly features exhibitions tracing the city's (and America's) black heritage, offering a look at the African-American impact on the transformation from an 1830s frontier town to an Olympic city presided over by a series of African-American mayors.

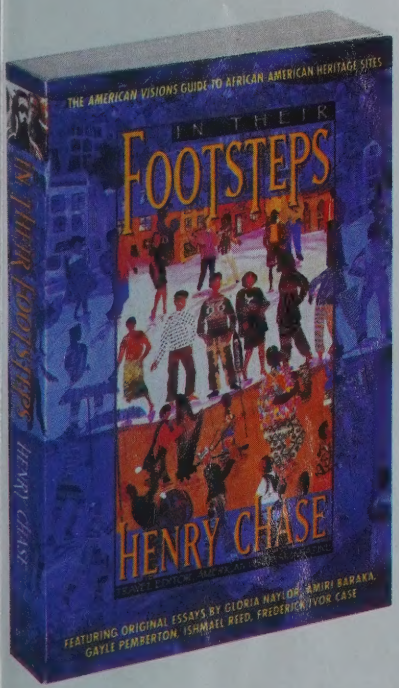
Underground Atlanta is a below-the-streets minicity formed when viaducts elevated Atlanta's downtown streets and businesses in the 1920s. Days and nights: look, eat, shop, dance and check out the live music. And when you surface, you're right next to the World of Coca-Cola Pavilion, which pays homage to an icon of pop culture.

The **Center for Puppetry Arts** is a sure bet for adults and for younger children.

For further ideas and details, call the **Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau** [(404) 521-6600]. ■

IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS
by Henry Chase

AMERICAN VISIONS' GUIDE TO AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES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— Bryant Gumbel, Host, NBC Today

This indispensable guide to black heritage sites in the United States and Canada is organized into five geographic regions covering more than 1,000 landmarks. An absorbing cultural document, it also features original essays by Gloria Naylor, Amiri Baraka, Gayle Pemberton, Ishmael Reed and Frederick Ivor Case.

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ATHENS

Courtesy Ga.ITT

The Morton Theatre.

Locals knew it as "the Hot Corner." Here, at the juncture of Washington and Hull streets, was found the center of black business and politics in Athens during the opening years of the 20th century. From 1910 onward, Monroe "Pink" Morton's theater dominated this landscape and added entertainment to the attractions of the corner.

Morton's building, which the *Athens Daily Herald* described as the "largest of its kind owned exclusively by a colored man in the world," housed more than just his theater. The office of Ida Mae Johnson Hiram, Athens' first licensed black female dentist, and the E.D. Harris Pharmacy, Athens' first black-owned drugstore, shared its space, as did a bakery and a doctor's clinic.

The **Morton Theatre,** however, was what caught the eye—and the ear; for here played Bessie Smith, Cab Calloway, Sissieretta Jones, Butterbeans and Suzie (and a host of now forgotten, early black vaudeville acts), Blind Willie McTell, and—possibly—Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong.

As Hollywood and movies replaced vaudeville and live performances, the Morton sought to keep in step, becoming a cinema in the 1940s. Then, in 1955, a fire in its projection booth led to the closing of the theater—and to the decline of the Hot Corner.

The ensuing decades witnessed the steady deterioration of the theater that had been Pink Morton's pride and joy. Today, however, the theater's curtain has again been raised, live performances grace its stage, and the restored entertainment house is once again a center of attention.

"The Morton Theatre is alive and well and open after 30 years," says its director, Bob Herman, with evident joy.

The Morton is more than merely open—it's the centerpiece of a black heritage day-trip to Athens. Visitors have the delight of viewing a restored pre-World War I theater that seated about 800 and had pagoda-style boxes, a horseshoe-shaped balcony, an ornate though not opulent interior, and a bright show curtain, now lost, painted in red, gold and light blue.

Visitors should look for two things in particular. The graffiti scrawled on the backstage dressing room walls provide a vivid documentation of the performers who graced the Morton. Still visible in chalk is the recorded presence of Bob White's Dark Town Swells (April 11 to 19, 1919); in paint, Charles "Fat" Hayden (1923); and in pencil, Joe Johnson's Brown Babies—evidently a success—whose "3 nights" is scratched through and changed to "6 nights." The undated presence of the Rags Honey Troupe, Nora B. Johnson and Eva Reese is also unofficially recorded, as is a very graphic statement concerning smoking regulations.

Courtesy Ga.ITT

The Morton Theatre: "Alive and well after 30 years."

About an hour from Atlanta, Athens provides day-trippers with more than just the Morton. It's the home of the University of Georgia and thus the site of some great sports events year-round. On campus, the **Butts-Mehre Heritage Hall**—the university's sports museum—honors Heisman Trophy winner and U.S. Winter Olympian Herschel Walker; Teresa Edwards, thrice a member of the U.S. women's Olympic basketball team (two gold medals and a bronze); and Katrina McClain, who joined Edwards at the last two Olympics, bringing home a gold and a bronze medal.

Look, too, for **Wilson's,** a prominent no-frills, good-food, black-owned establishment, and **Weaver D's Fine Foods,** a local black-owned eatery whose motto, Automatic for the People, serves as the title of Athens-born R.E.M.'s latest album.

Athens also has a great music-club scene (R.E.M. is joined in its Athens birth by the B-52s), the **State Botanical Garden of Georgia,** and the **First African Methodist Episcopal Church** and **Hill First Baptist Church,** both formed in the first years of Reconstruction.

For further ideas and details, including information on local tours, call the **Athens Convention & Visitors Bureau** [(706) 546-1805]. ■

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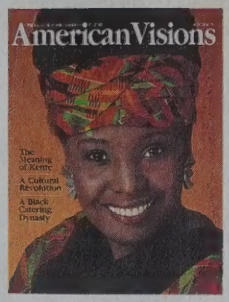

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HOME IN GEORGIA

by Henry Chase

Courtesy Harriet Tubman Museum

At Macon's Harriet Tubman Museum, "She" honors Georgia's black women.

Sitting on the dock of the bay in San Francisco, having roamed 2,000 miles from his Macon home, Otis Redding lamented, "I left my home in Georgia ..."

It was more than the beauty of Macon's cherry-blossomed streets that inspired his plangent song, more than the imprint of the city's powerful musical lore (which runs from Lena Horne through Little Richard all the way up to the Allman Brothers), more than the enveloping warmth of a populace and place that have escaped the soul-parching aridity of urban skyscrapers and blight.

It's small wonder that Redding's mind wandered home, for he grew up not merely in rural Georgia (which offers sundry pleasures—catfish ponds, frogs, hounds, hunting, piney woods, mules and barns—to its young), but outside *Macon:* a town blessed with African-American heritage, black endeavor and civic cooperation.

All that's needed to discover this rich past is a little initiative and the city's excellent "Macon, Georgia: Black Heritage" brochure.

Start your exploration of Macon's black past at the **Harriet Tubman Museum.** From the moment you step inside the doors of Georgia's largest African-American museum, your interest is seized, for on the wall immediately to your right is "She," Wini McQueen's collage that highlights truth and apocrypha from more than a century of black struggle and achievement.

Note particularly McQueen's incorporation of Ellen Craft, for Craft was one of the 19th century's great stories of initiative, escape, adventure and commitment. The daughter of her master and his slave Maria, Craft at the age of 22 conceived an ingenious plan to escape bondage. Aided by her nearly white complexion, she dressed up as an invalid Southern gentleman and had her enslaved husband—acting the role of a manservant—escort her to Philadelphia for "medical treatment."

In 1849, a year after their escape, the Crafts achieved fame as two of America's best-known fugitives on the abolitionist lecture circuit. Moving to England one step ahead of slave catchers, the Crafts formed an abolitionist circle, wrote the book *Running a Thousand Miles to Freedom* and established a vocational school. They returned to the United States in 1869 and established a school in Byron County, Georgia—from which they had escaped decades earlier.

Complementing "She" is the Tubman's mural gallery, whose centerpiece is Macon artist Wilfred Stroud's "From Africa to America." Stroud's seven panels trace the transformation of abducted Africans into African Americans and the latter's hard climb to achievement.

The museum also offers three galleries of original works by contemporary black artists, ranging from the well-known to the emerging, from the intensely political to the purely abstract, from those working in traditional forms to those at the cutting edge of new media.

Africa, too, figures at the Tubman, whose holdings cover the breadth of the continent. Paintings and tapestries from Ethiopia, carved ivory from Tanzania, and wooden carvings and household implements from Kenya yield a sense of East Africa, while West Africa is represented by masks and wall hangings from Liberia, textiles from Ghana, and masks, musical instruments and textiles from Nigeria.

Primed by the Tubman and guided by the city's black heritage brochure, you're well prepared for a tour of the town. In years gone by, Macon's black community centered on **Pleasant Hill**, which is now a National Historic District. Here were the homes of Lena Horne and Little Richard.

Today, **Little Richard's childhood home** (1437 Woodliff), where one of the wildest musical forces of the modern age first let loose his piercing screams, is a *private residence that can only be viewed from the sidewalk.* One day, when justice triumphs, Graceland will be rivaled by the birthplace of the man who gave America "Good Golly Miss Molly," "Tutti Frutti" and so much more!

Till then, if you want to learn more of Macon's African-American past, just walk around the corner from Little Richard's childhood home. Here you will find the **Booker T. Washington Community Center,** which houses memorabilia, correspondence and photographs of Redding, and other artifacts of Macon's black community.

Directly across the street from the center is the old **Romer Congregational Church,** a product of a late-19th-century Northern missionary effort to educate Macon's freedmen. Today, it is in the process of being restored for use as a community theater.

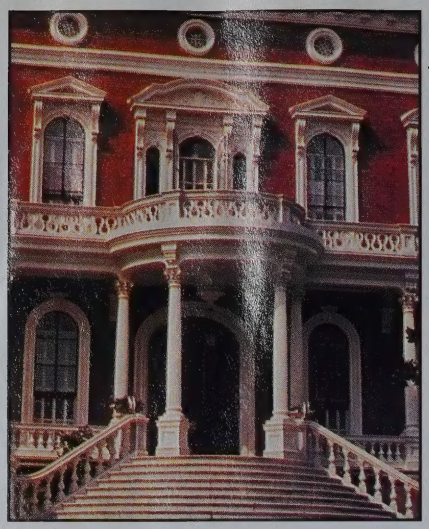
Walking down from Pleasant Hill toward the center of the city, you will pass still older churches central to Macon's story, including **Washington Avenue Presbyterian,** Georgia's oldest black Presbyterian church, whose separate black congregation dates back to 1838; **Holsey Temple Christian Methodist Church,** which began in 1848 as an African-American splinter of First Methodist; and **First Baptist Church,** established by a black congregation 25 years before Emancipation.

Not far from First Baptist, you will find the **Sgt. Rodney M. Davis Monument,** which pays tribute to the only Macon native to have won the Medal of Honor. The U.S. Marine sergeant was killed in action in Vietnam in 1967 when he threw himself on a hand grenade to save comrades in his platoon.

Whether remembering Macon's beauty and a community centered on its places of worship, or the re-

Courtesy Macon CVB

Checking out the Harriet Tubman Museum



Courtesy Macon CVB

Macon's Hay House.

sistance of Ellen Craft and the heroism of Rodney Davis, Redding had deep resources of inspiration to draw upon as he sat on that dock many miles from home. Once you visit Macon, you, too, will become a believer—and the memories will linger even if you sit looking out over San Francisco's glorious bay.

POINTERS

If you're looking for a quick bite to eat, try **H&H Restaurant.** Just steps away from the Cotton Avenue offices of Capricorn Records, who helped bring Redding and the Allman Brothers to national attention, H&H is the child of "Miz" Hill. In 1950, tired of walking behind a two-mule plow team on her family's farm outside Warrenton, Ga., Hill moved to Macon. Since then she has run the city's pre-eminent "down-home cookin" place. Although she may not have favorites among her seven children and a flock of grandchildren and great-grandchildren, nor among her meals, she does have a favorite among Macon's musical greats: Check out her walls, which are dominated by photos of the Allman Brothers, who used to fly her daughter, "Mama Louise" Hudson, out to California when they grew lonely for the Southern cooking that lay almost 3,000 miles away.

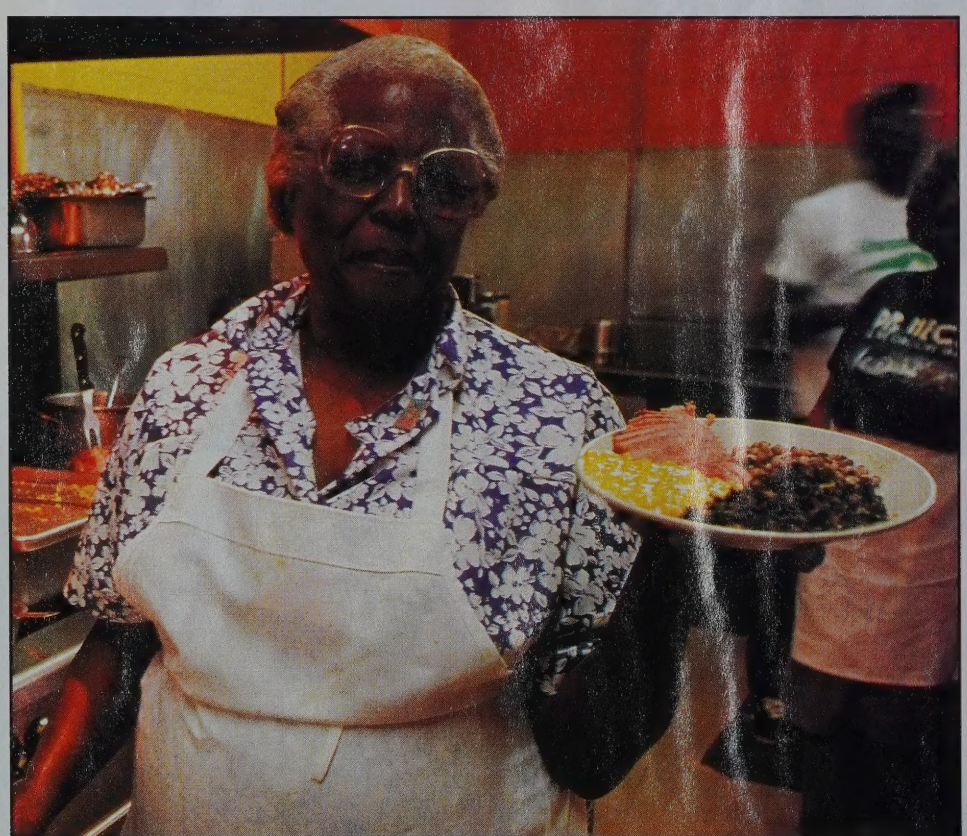
If you're looking to stay at central Georgia's only four-diamond, triple-A hotel, check into the **1842 Inn.** Single accommodations range from $85 to $95 (doubles, from $95 to $125), and, depending upon your budget, it's money well spent. If your budget is tight, or your preference is to spend money on food rather than a bed, don't worry: Macon has plenty of rooms for its guests.

If you like mansions, you'll delight in the **Hay House,** an Italian Renaissance Revival masterpiece now being restored. (The restoration is uncovering successive layers of embellishment, and glimpses of this meticulous process are an additional joy for most visitors.)

For all its multiple pleasures, Macon remains a town, not a city. Simply walk (or take a carriage ride) around the downtown area at night, when you'll most clearly notice that Macon has only a handful of buildings of more than five stories, or during the day, when you'll most clearly notice that Macon has close to 200,000 cherry trees—far more than Washington, D.C.

For the future, bear in mind the following attractions: the **Douglass Theatre** (once segregated Macon's black stage and music hall, and then its movie house), which is being restored to its former glory and which will, among other things, regularly host black films produced in the 1920s, '30s and '40s; the **Georgia Music Hall of Fame** (Lena Horne, Little Richard, the Allmans, James Brown, R.E.M., Ray Charles and many more); and the **Georgia Sports Hall of Fame.** All three should open within the next year or two, collectively making Macon a must-stop-and-see spot.

For further ideas and details, call the **Macon Convention & Visitors Bureau** [(800) 768-3401]. Be sure to request its local black heritage brochure. ■



Courtesy Macon CVB

"Miz" Hill, with "Mama Louise" in the background.

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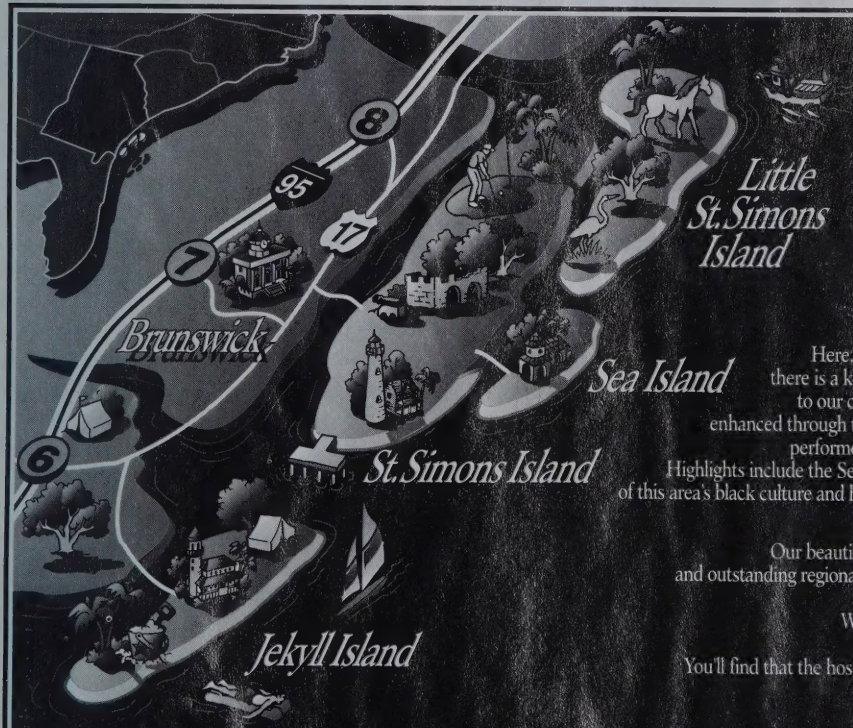

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4 Glynn Avenue, Brunswick, GA 31520 GEORGIA'S COLONIAL COAST

FINALLY GOT THE NEWS?

by Henry Chase

All photos courtesy Ga.ITT (5)

Savannah's waterfront combines history, beauty, cafes and boutiques.

Not long ago, when I introduced Savannah to an acquaintance who had spent some years living in France, she insisted that the city was as lovely as Paris. *Le Monde,* France's world-famous newspaper, is not so bold, merely calling it "the most beautiful city in North America."

Savannah's beauty is not only renowned; it is defining. The town is a profusion of green squares graced by monuments and fountains. It is moss-draped oak trees overlooking streets, daily witness to the rival demands for attention between gorgeous Colonial houses and banks of azaleas and camellias and rows of blooming dogwood. It is more than 2,300 architecturally and historically significant buildings, all located within the 2½-square-mile Historic District that can be viewed from horse-drawn carriages. It is also the "Factors Walk," a nine-block Riverfront Plaza that stretches along the Savannah River, where old cotton warehouses with walls of oyster shell and narrow passageways and cobblestone streets recall the city's Colonial founding.

While the Historic District, the Colonial houses, the squares, the oaks, dogwood, magnolias and azaleas gently lull one into serenity, the riverfront quickens the senses, for here are found scores of outdoor cafes and restaurants, taverns, studios, shops, museums and opportunities to board sightseeing riverboats.

Savannah's visual appeal alone is compelling justification for anyone's visit—but the unknown story about the city is that Savannah is as richly laden with the history of the African-American experience as it is with beauty. And in more than one instance, the two dovetail.

A walk around Greene Square and Washington Square in Savannah's Historic District reveals this dovetailing in all its glory. Greene Square introduces the visitor to the **Second African Baptist Church,** and thus to Savannah's monumental role both as the home of America's first autonomous black church and as the host city of pastors who went on to become the earliest African-American missionaries to the West Indies and Africa. Second African dates back to December 26, 1802, and still stands on its original site, calmly gazing down on Greene Square as if to settle the competing claims of beauty and history, the sacred and the profane.

The church's historical importance is not restricted to the early Federal period, nor simply to matters ecclesiastical and local. In the closing months of the Civil War, Second African was the site of the meeting between leaders of coastal Georgia's black community and General William Tecumseh Sherman and Lincoln's Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton. At the Second African Baptist meeting, Sherman read out his historic Field Order 15, setting aside Georgia's Sea Islands and abandoned rice fields 30 miles inland for newly freed slaves, to whom he promised 40 acres and a mule.

In the square opposite the church is a historical marker outlining some of this history; another historical marker fronts the church, whose original foundation is still visible—mute testimony to centuries of black initiative.

Bordering Greene Square is President Street, which retains the largest number of free black houses from the Colonial and Federal periods. (All these houses, whether then owned by wealthy rice planters or by free black merchants and

Stained glass at First African Baptist.

craftsmen, are clapboard, which was the norm until the 1820s and '30s and the rise of cotton production and conspicuous mansions. All, too, are today *private homes and offer exterior viewing only.)* Look for the 1810 Cunningham House, once the home of a Second African pastor, and the 1818 Wall House.

Nearby is Washington Square, another noted free black neighborhood. Look particularly for the old home of Jane DeVeaux on St. Julien. The daughter of a Second African pastor, DeVeaux returned to Savannah from a Northern education in 1847 and conducted a secret school for blacks until Sherman's forces entered the city almost two decades later. During these years, she regularly hid her charges in the attic when white civic patrols entered her home (as they did the home of any free black) in search of runaways or students.

But more than just old, attractive homes set around eye-catching squares tell the tale of Savannah's black past. Visitors will surely want to stop by the **King-Tisdell Cottage,** in the 1890s a middle-class African-American residence and today the city's black heritage museum. Outstanding artifacts on view include slave bills of sale from the late 1700s onward, newspapers from the 1830s and '40s, woven baskets from the Gullah culture established on the coasts of Georgia and South Carolina, photographs of former slave quarters on St. Catherines Island, and the Arabic-language meditations of Ben-Ali, a black Sapelo Island slave driver.

Near to King-Tisdell is the **Beach Institute,** where visitors will find a range of works by local black artists. The highlight here is the Ulysses Davis collection, which covers 67 years of the sculptor's work, from his earliest surviving carving, executed when he was 10, to the creation he completed just before his death.

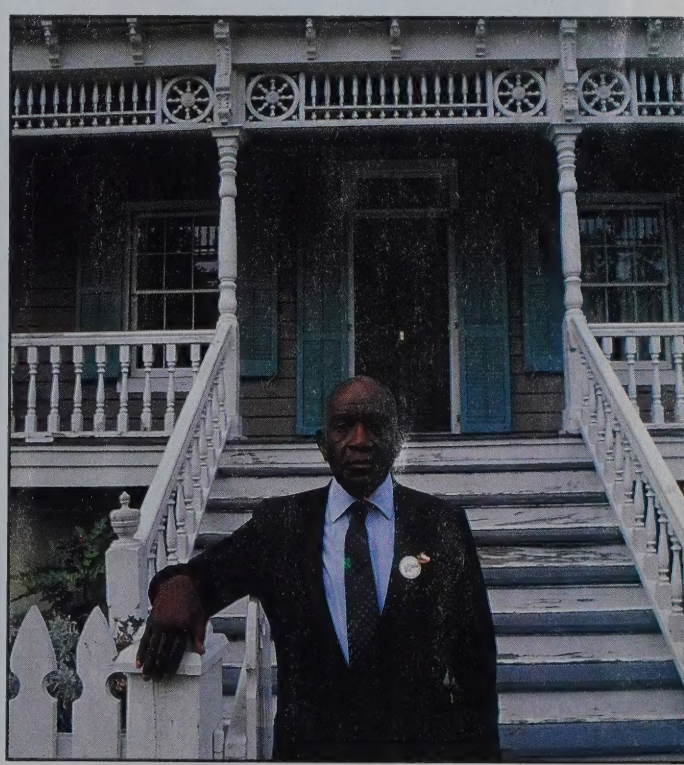
The truest measure of Savannah's black past will be found in and around the city's Yamacraw district, first in the two churches that testify to the creation of an autonomous African-American voice and second in the old graveyard in which are buried the founding fathers of the Colonial community that gave rise to that voice.

George Liele was an American giant. Born in slavery in Virginia and taken South by his owner, Liele was consumed by the good news he heard in a white Baptist church in Georgia. Convicted of sin and reborn in Christ, he began preaching to whites and blacks on both sides of the Savannah River. Freed to preach and ordained in 1775, Liele in 1777 formally organized a black congregation that dated back to his prelicensed preaching of 1773. The **First African Baptist Church** thus claims to be the oldest continuously active, autonomously developed black church in America.

During the Revolution, Liele sided with the British (who promised freedom to slaves who fled their rebellious masters), and he left Savannah with the evacuating British forces in 1782. Arriving in Jamaica, Liele converted 400 souls and began an organized mission to Africa.

His departure from Savannah scarcely slowed the tide of black Baptism. Early in 1788, Andrew Bryan, who had earlier been converted by Liele, was ordained and became pastor of First African, whose original house of worship was raised in 1794 on a plot of land in Yamacraw.

Today, First African Baptist Church is located not far from its original site and is graced with stained-glass windows depicting



W.W. Law at the King-Tisdell Cottage.

Always appealing: A carriage ride around Savannah's Historic District.

Liele, Bryan and others of the church's earliest leaders; with original windows, lectern and pews (note the African symbols etched in their ends by African-American carvers) that date back to the present building's 1859 construction; and with church memorabilia and records that date back to its first days. When you visit First African, you should be sure to wander down to the basement and note a series of holes in the basement floor that appear to reflect an African element of design: Their functional purpose was as air holes for the runaways who hid in the space between the basement floor and the foundation underneath.

The Yamacraw site of the original First African is now occupied by First Bryan Baptist Church. Here the visitor will find a monument to George Liele in front of the church (note the variant spelling of his surname, which is typical of America's earlier days), a historical marker just across the street in the pocket park, and an 1873 building with stained-glass windows that pay tribute to the founding fathers of the African-American church.

One more site demands attention for the visitor interested in Savannah's black past, **Laurel Grove-South Cemetery.** Here, buried in close proximity, are Andrew Bryan and other early black Savannah leaders, such as Andrew Cox Marshall, who lived to be 100 and died while traveling up North on church business (note the marvelous rhetorical cadence on his gravestone), and Henry Cunningham. Buried nearby are the various leaders of the black Masonic movement and of Savannah's black militia, a late-19th-century victim of the imposition of Jim Crow; the mother and stepfather of Robert S. Abbott, the Georgia-born founder of the *Chicago Defender;* and the leading free black families of the antebellum city.

The owner-cook stands in front of Nita's.

These remnants of Savannah's heritage of African-American endeavor are not merely enlightening black sites and an opportunity for a rewarding excursion around a lovely city; they are poignant and powerful reminders of the tragedy, the loss to America as a nation, that ensued upon the overturning of Colonial Georgia's original prohibition against slavery. They more than merit attention; they bring into sharp relief both the reality and the irony of so much loss (and so much achievement) amid such great and enduring beauty. They intensify a complexity of loss, gain and transcendence that is fully human—and truly Savannah.

POINTERS

For an evening spot, try **Hanna's East Bar,** upstairs in the **Pirate's House Restaurant.** Owned by Ben Tucker, the noted jazz bassist who once graced Billy Taylor's trio (among other outstanding groups), this establishment offers drinks, ambiance and music (some of which occasionally features Tucker and his 280-year-old bass).

For an old-style, don't-tell-your-doctor, no-frills, good-food, black-owned eatery, venture into the Historic District and check out **Nita's.**

For the future, bear in mind the **Ralph Mark Gilbert Civil Rights Museum,** which will open in the old Wage Earners Bank, once the largest black bank in the United States. Here will be found Savannah's story of the struggle against segregation and for equal rights—a struggle that occurred outside the mainstream of the movement and whose successes predated by some years the better-known stories of Martin Luther King Jr., Alabama and Mississippi.

Stop by **St. Philips Monumental A.M.E.,** Georgia's first A.M.E. church and the base for the great Bishop Henry M. Turner, the late 19th century's leading proponent of emigration to Africa. The church's archives have photographs of Turner and records of his tenure, along with other memorabilia.

For a great guided tour of Savannah's black heritage, call (912) 233-2027 and ask Mr. W.W. Law to show you around. His tours are more than comprehensive; they're more than definitive: You can't have a better time, nor learn more, anywhere in the country.

Spend some time simply strolling the waterfront and the historic district, mindlessly enjoying the city's charm and beauty. Remember: it's a vacation!

For further ideas and details, including information on the many different tours of the city that are available, call the **Savannah Convention & Visitors Bureau** [(800) 444-2427]. Be sure to ask for the "Historic Savannah's African-American Heritage" brochure. ■

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The Golden Isles

SIGHS OF PLEASURE

by Henry Chase

You've always known how to define serenity, but Georgia's Golden Isles—St. Simons Island, Jekyll Island, Sea Island and Little St. Simons Island—allow you to experience it. They introduce you to a realm of beaches, ocean waves, palm trees, wisteria, golf courses, tennis courts and miles of bike trails.

Make that long-dreamed-of chip shot on the back nine; smash your brother-in-law's serve back over the net (Yes!) j-u-s-t out of his stretching reach; bicycle with the family along trails that tempt you to stop and view close up the profusion of flowers with riotous colors and sundry fragrances. Sun on the beaches or sit in the shade of the trees of Neptune Park and listen to the gentle slap-slap-slap of the waves striking shore. Watch your kids' eyes grow wide when they discover the eggs of loggerhead turtles, witness a school of dolphins playfully leaping for a moment above the water's surface or catch a glimpse of right whales wintering off the islands' shores with their newborn calves. Enjoy being away from the hustle of off-island life—and the welcome from the local people, who cheerfully share the calming pleasures of the Golden Isles.

Enjoy, too, the surprising depth of the Georgia coast's black heritage—and the welcome from the local people, who respect your exploration of that treasure.

Courtesy Jekyll Island Authority

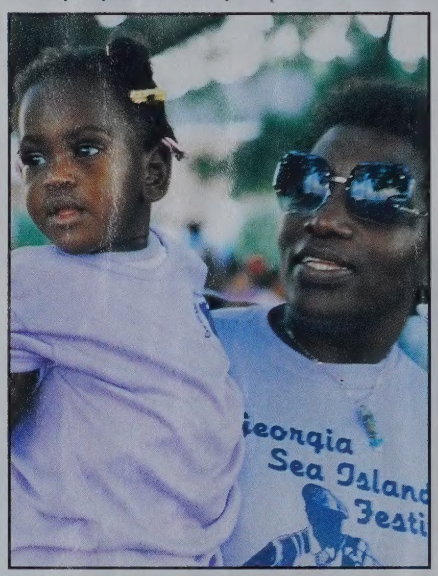
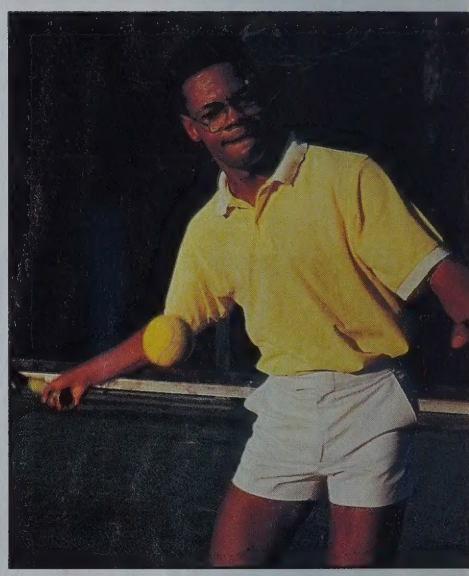


Photo by Sandy Jones



Courtesy Jekyll Island Authority

BSK News/Bobby Haven

The Golden Isles: Beaches, boats, golf, tennis, snorkeling, festivals ...

An ideal starting point for uncovering the past's buried treasure—particularly the unique Gullah culture that was forged in the isolation of the rice and Sea Island cotton plantations of coastal Georgia—will be found on the mainland at **Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation.** Hofwyl once boasted 7,000 acres of rice fields, worked by more than 350 slaves. Today, guided tours of one of America's few extant antebellum rice plantations last 45 minutes to an hour and a half. (There is also a self-guided one-mile loop trail, but its interpretive focus lacks a strong African-American accent.)

The most important thing to remember at Hofwyl is that you should *state your interpretive interest and have your tour structured to suit your taste.* If you're interested in the "other half"—the world of the African diaspora and the African-American culture created in the cauldron of dispossession and bondage—alert your guide. Better still, request Jackie Edwards, a 21-year veteran of Georgia's park service and a 14-year veteran of Hofwyl.

Although the remnants of the house servants' quarters and the dairy barn are the sole Hofwyl sites with an African-American accent and only offer exterior viewing, Edwards is deeply knowledgeable about the nexus of rice production and its attendant African-American culture.

Whether dressed as a living-history interpreter or in her park service clothes, whether pounding mortar and pestle in the old rice fields and chanting, "Peas and rice, peas and rice, peas and rice; done, done, done," or explaining the post-Emancipation ties maintained between both sides of slavery's divide, she has enlightening tales to tell. (Be sure to ask her about Liverpool Hazzard and Jane and the social distinctions maintained well into the 1930s by freed folk of Butler Island and St. Catherines Island.)

Be sure, as well, to stop in Hofwyl's museum, which offers artifacts, photographs, memorabilia and outstanding video presentations, all of which interpret the material and social culture forged in the rice fields. Look particularly for late-19th-century photographs of African-American laborers—which are not always on display, as exhibits rotate.

Although Hofwyl is the area's outstanding interpretation of the black experience on Georgia's coast, there are several sites on the Sea Islands that will claim your attention. Your starting point for this exploration of the islands is the excellent "African-American Heritage Highlights" brochure prepared by the Brunswick & Golden Isles Visitors Bureau.

St. Simons Island offers glimpses of the full range of the African-American story, from resistance (Ebo Landing) to adaptation (Neptune Park), from Northern immigration (Robert S. Abbott) to generations of extended settlement (the Sea Island Festival). And your exploration of this story is the more enjoyable because it takes you all around the island, from quiet churches with tree-shaded green lawns to marshes graced by herons, to the ocean's edge.

In May of 1803, a band of Igbo born in African freedom and destined for slavery on St. Simons and Sapelo islands' plantations rebelled as the landing boat bearing them drew up along Dunbar Creek. Determined to return to their homeland and confident of the protection of their god, Chukwu, to whom they offered a hymn, the Igbo resolutely marched into the creek, back toward Africa, whence they had come. The water soon rose above their heads, drowning most of the band. The few survivors, who were taken to Cannon's Point Plantation on St. Simons and to Sapelo, passed on to succeeding generations the story of their response to their abduction to America, allowing their descendants and others to locate the general area of what is now known as **Ebo Landing.**

Three decades later, Neptune was born in slavery on the King family's Retreat Plantation. He, too, would display courage, though to ends determined by adaptation and the lack of having ever known a free life. During the Civil War, he accompanied one of his master's sons into battle as his manservant. The young King was killed shortly before Christmas 1862 at the bloody battle of Fredericksburg, and when his comrades would not hazard the constant rifle fire to recover his body, Neptune did so, bringing his charge back to the island for burial. Then, though he was not compelled, he returned to the war as the manservant of his master's youngest son, serving with him until the close of the conflict.

As a freedman, Neptune took the surname Small and accepted a tract of land from his former owners, dying in 1907 and being laid to rest, under a bronze plaque recounting his heroism, on the old Retreat Burying Ground. Today, Small's tract is **Neptune Park,** one of St. Simons' most popular recreation spots.

A century after Neptune's birth, the aging Robert S. Abbott, the founder of the *Chicago Defender*—the most influential black newspaper of the 20th century and the leading exponent of African-American migration to the North—returned to his St. Simons birthplace and erected a granite obelisk honoring his father and two beloved aunts. Today, while you visit old Fort Frederica on the island, you can view the **Abbott Monument,** which pays tribute to the people who prepared the way for a warrior of the African-American cause.

St. Simons is also home to the annual **Sea Island Festival,** which

Courtesy Ga.ITT

Jackie Edwards, Hofwyl park ranger.

joyfully celebrates a culture developed in bondage and in isolation, and now freely retained. The festival will appeal to anyone with an interest in smoked mullet and other "low country" foods, in powerful music drawn from Africa's savannah and lowlands and transformed in America, in the craftsmanship created by a people who escaped the bland homogenization of industrial processes, or in a good time.

Jekyll Island was once a privately owned seasonal resort for America's wealthiest families. Today its story, including the role of the black labor force that serviced the upper crust, is being uncovered within the island's National Historic District. From Red Row, the African-American workers' housing area, through videotaped oral histories of those now in their 80s who can remember the Vanderbilts, Morgans, Astors, Fields and Rockefellers who once played here, the island's black heritage is being uncovered.

To date, the visible element of this heritage is limited; it will be found primarily in old photographs, some of which are located in the **Jekyll Museum Orientation Center** and others of which will be found on the walls of the **Jekyll Club,** now a hotel but once the residential clubhouse and prime gathering spot for America's moneyed elite. Jekyll's lure remains intense—all that's changed is that it's now within the reach of everyone in search of a family vacation.

America perhaps has resort areas to rival the Golden Isles for family fun and relaxation, but you'll be challenged to find anyplace in America that combines so memorably the beauty of a sunset's reflection on the water, the pleasures of a well-hit golf or tennis ball and the laugh that claims a child's face as he or she zooms down a waterslide with the joys of exploring a people's hard-won triumph and transcendence.

POINTERS

The Jekyll Club, now a Radisson hotel, is a special treat. Its prices, though at the upper end, are not unbearable. (If they stretch your budget more than you think appropriate, you can always enjoy a lunch or dinner in its excellent restaurant while staying elsewhere.)

Jekyll Island offers the widest range of hotel prices, has the smallest "downtown" (you can easily overlook it) and has bike paths from one end of the island to the other. All its beaches are public.

St. Simons Island, Jekyll Island, Little St. Simons Island and Sea Island all lie close together. Staying on one will not restrict your easy enjoyment of the others, so whether your preference is for golf (207 holes), tennis (acres and acres of courts), swimming, boating, sport fishing, crabbing, biking, parasailing, sunning or strolling, you're well placed for adventure and relaxation.

Visit mainland Brunswick, particularly for its harbor of commercial shrimp boats and its antique shops and boutiques.

If wildlife appeals, seize the opportunity to visit **Cumberland Island**—you'll never forget the experience! Here, on Georgia's southernmost barrier isle, wild horses, wading birds, alligators, deer and raccoons share space with the ruins of two antebellum mansions. **Note:** The island is administered by the National Park Service. Excepting a small private inn, primitive campsites offer the only overnight accommodations, and reservations are essential for camping and ferry service.

Oh ... you're on the coast; did we mention the seafood? Enjoy!

For further ideas and details, call the **Brunswick & Golden Isles Visitors Bureau** [(800) 933-COAST] or the **Jekyll Island Convention & Visitors Bureau** [(800) 841-6586]. Be sure to ask for the former's local black heritage brochure. ■

Orrin Sage Whiteman, *Early Days of Coastal Georgia*

Dido—water jug on head and lunch pail on arm—worked the rice fields of Hofuyl-Broadfield Plantation.

BLACK HERITAGE COLUMBUS GEORGIA

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GEORGIA
COLONIAL COAST
on my mind

EAST TO WEST

by Henry Chase

Courtesy Duncan Sheidt

Ma Rainey, "Mother of the Blues."

From pre-Revolutionary days through the civil rights struggle of the 1960s, African Americans have left an imprint on Georgia—an imprint that today can be seen from its eastern to its western borders, from Augusta to Columbus.

The Great Awakening, the mid-18th-century revivalist ferment that left "burnt-out districts" from New England to the Deep South, opened the gate to bringing African Americans into Christian churches. Baptists and Methodists, in particular, licensed black men to preach, with the result that by the 1770s some African-American preachers were leading their own congregations.

By 1773, the biracial Silver Bluff Baptist Church, located just across the Savannah River from Augusta, had passed into black hands and was pastored by David George, one of the century's great divines. George led a life of adventure and purpose. Fleeing from slavery in Virginia, he lived in the wilds of South Carolina until sold back into slavery not far from Augusta by the Natchez Indian chief King Jack.

Awakened to the Baptist faith by a slave, and to literacy by his master's children, George preached at Silver Bluff until the chaos of the American Revolution offered him freedom and took him from Augusta, to Savannah, to Canada and then to Sierra Leone, where he planted the Baptist faith and died.

The onset of the Revolutionary War also dispersed the Silver Bluff congregation, most of whom fled either to Augusta or Savannah. In the former city in the 1780s, the **Springfield Baptist Church** was organized from remnants of the Silver Bluff flock, becoming one of black America's founding churches.

Almost eight decades later, in the aftermath of the Civil War, the church's basement served as the first classroom of the Augusta Institute, a freedmen's school. In time, the school moved to Atlanta; came under the direction of its first black president, the renowned educator John Hope; and took the name Morehouse College. Today, the college that began in Springfield's basement is best known as the alma mater of Martin Luther King Jr.

Visitors to the rear of the present church building view its predecessor, a wooden, New England-meetinghouse-style structure raised in 1801. One of the few examples of this style in the South, it is congregation-centered, in revolt against the typical altar-centered liturgical style of most churches.

Far to the west, on Georgia's border with Alabama, stands a monument to black secular achievement. Gertrude Pridgett "Ma" Rainey put her stamp on the blues—and the blues' stamp on America—long before Bessie Smith hit the scene.

Rainey was born in Columbus to parents who were tent-show minstrels, and the professional career of the "Mother of the Blues" opened here at age 14, when she appeared in a production of *The Bunch of Black Berries*.

Not long after, she hooked up with Will Rainey, who led the Rabbit Foot Minstrels troupe. Married in 1904, the pair billed themselves as "Rainey and Rainey, Assassinators of the Blues."

Ma Rainey's powerful evocation of black life in secular and spiritual song won her a national fol-

Courtesy U.S. Air Force

Eugene Bullard, World War I pilot.

lowing as a gospel and blues performer long before her 1920 recordings preserved her sound.

Rainey retired in 1934 to her hometown, which had seen little of her in the last quarter of a century and which listed her in the 1937 Columbus City Directory as "Rainey, Gertrude, colored, 805 5th Avenue." In Columbus, she became active in the Friendship Baptist Church, in whose choir she sang. Rainey died in 1939 and is buried in Columbus' Porterdale Cemetery. The death certificate of the Mother of the Blues listed her occupation as "housekeeping."

Today's visitors to Columbus will find the **Ma Rainey House,** the retirement residence of the woman who first transported the blues from its Southern setting. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the house at present can only be viewed from the outside, though there are plans to turn it into a museum.

POINTERS

Prominent African-American heritage sites in Columbus include the **childhood home of Alma Thomas,** America's foremost black female painter; a **historical marker commemorating Eugene Bullard,** an African-American pilot in World War I who flew for the French since he was racially barred from the U.S. Army Air Corps; and the **St. James A.M.E. Church,** whose wooden doors were hand-carved by slaves.

For further ideas and details about Columbus sites, call the **Columbus Convention & Visitors Bureau** [(706) 322-1613]. Be sure to ask for the brochure "Columbus, Georgia: Black Heritage."

For further ideas and details about Augusta sites, call the **Augusta Convention & Visitors Bureau** [(706) 823-6600]. ■

Design Heidi Lange : Kikuyu Women

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Looking for some family fun ideas in Georgia? These snapshots offer some ideas on what to do and where to go off the beaten path. Our suggestions scarcely scratch the surface of the state, so take them as a guide, not as gospel.

SNAPSHOTS Across Georgia

by Henry Chase

How about hang gliding from the top of Lookout Mountain, where Union and Confederate troops once clashed in "the Battle Above the Clouds"? Today, at **Lookout Mountain Flight Park,** seasoned pilots fly in tandem with inexperienced, wanna-be gliders.

How about hiking through Chattahoochee National Forest, which contains three state parks—**Vogel, Moccasin Creek** and **Black Rock Mountain?** It's not the Andes—but if you wish, **Hawksbell Farm** will supply llamas to carry your gear and amaze your kids!

From Chattahoochee in Georgia's far northwest to Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge and Wilderness Area (which includes the **Stephen C. Foster State Park)** in Georgia's far southeast, you'll find an opportunity to hike nature trails, camp, boat, swim, fish, raft, golf or go horseback riding amid scenery that will take your breath away.

In fact, Georgia's parks are an ideal place for family vacations and reunions. (If you're planning a reunion—which will likely involve older folks—don't forget the need for local accommodations of a less challenging sort than a campground. Remember also that many national hotel chains, such as Holiday Inn, offer family reunion packages that include amenities and discounts.) Wherever in Georgia you take your family or hold your reunion, you're sure to find nearby sites that offer relaxation, fun and insights into the state's multicultural past.

In northern Georgia, the Chieftains Trail explores the remains of three Indian civilizations. At **Fort Mountain State Park,** the visitor is confronted by a prehistoric, man-made wall of rocks that dates back more than a thousand years and whose purpose has eluded scholars. In Cartersville, the **Etowah Indian Mounds Historic Site** traces the story of the corn farmers of the Mississippian Culture (A.D. 1000-1500), whose age-old temple mounds still stand.

By Colonial times, the Cherokees were the leading tribe in northwestern Georgia and—with their own written language, a constitution and the use of enslaved African-American labor—were well on their way to adapting to the modern world. Then, in northern Georgia in 1828, America's first major discovery of gold led to their ruin. Within a decade, the Cherokees were dispossessed of their land and expelled on the notorious "Trail of Tears." About half the tribe died on this brutal 2,000-mile march to Oklahoma.

Today, at **New Echota**—once the capital of an independent Indian nation that spanned four southeastern states—Cherokee culture is interpreted in several buildings, including a museum, the print shop that published the only Indian newspaper ever printed in 19th-century North America, and the home of a Moravian missionary to the Cherokees.

The **Uncle Remus Museum** in Eatonton is as much a monument to African-American folktales as it is to the tales' preserver and promoter, Joel Chandler Harris, who grew up around Eatonton and first heard the now-famous stories on the steps of slave cabins, in mule-drawn carts and in fields of corn and cotton. As passed on by "Uncle" Remus, an elderly former slave, the delightful tales that Harris transcribed celebrate the triumph of the underdog's opportunistic wit over the brute force of the powerful. Derived from a West African oral tradition that flourished in America as a form of resistance "literature" among generations of the dispossessed, the tales cheerfully recount how the trouble-prone but wily Brer Rabbit evades the clutches of Brer Fox and Brer Bear.

Visitors to the log-cabin museum see artifacts that date back to Harris' youth and that are mentioned in the tales. Visitors to Eatonton (which is the hometown of Alice Walker, who is well-remembered here) should be sure to stop by the courthouse in the center of town—for there stands a statue of Uncle Remus' most famous character, Brer Rabbit.

The **Albany Museum of Art** has a permanent collection of art and crafts from 18 sub-Saharan African cultures. While the bulk of its holdings are West African (for example, from the Ashanti, Dan, Yoruba, Gola and Mende peoples), the museum is notable for its Ethiopian Coptic crosses and votive pieces. East Africa is also represented; however, since many of these cultures are nomadic, the pieces on display tend to be small and utilitarian, with jewelry and basketry predominating.

One final, purely fun thought: On June 2, 1932, George Washington Perry went fishing on Montgomery Lake, which is not far from the town of McRae. Judging by the resistance on his line, he reckoned to have snagged a log. Instead he landed a 22-pound, 4-ounce largemouth bass, setting a world record (which still stands) and cementing central Georgia's reputation as a fisherman's paradise. All that has changed since then is that it's now a fisherperson's paradise.

P.S.: While in McRae, view the replica of the **Statue of Liberty,** which is one-twelfth the size of the original. In Georgia, fishing and freedom prevail! ■

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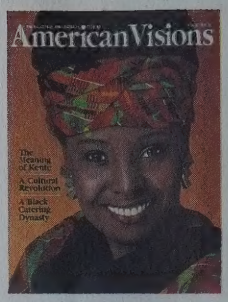

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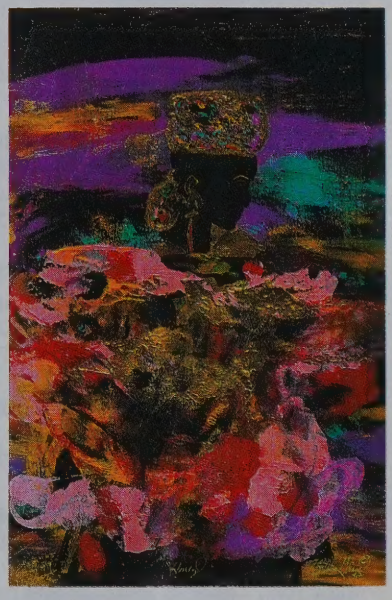

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Contact the attraction directly for days and hours of operation, as well as for admission prices.

◆ *Indicates that a brochure highlighting local African-American historical sites and attractions is available upon request*

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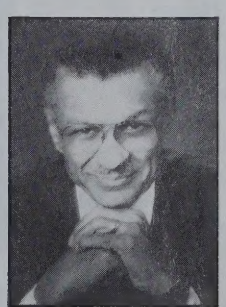

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Brunswick

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Cumberland Island

Cumberland Island lies less than an hour's drive south of Brunswick. The mainland departure point for trips to the island is the waterfront pavilion in St. Marys. For further information call the National Park Service, (912) 882-4335.

Jekyll Island

Jekyll Island Convention & Visitors Bureau
1 Beachview Drive 31527
(800) 841-6586

Jekyll Club/ Radisson Hotel
371 Riverview Drive 31527
(800) 333-3333

Jekyll Museum Orientation Center
Stable Road 31527
(912) 635-4036
Note: On Jekyll, the term "museum" refers not to a building, but to the island's historic district.

St. Simons Island

Abbott Monument
Fort Frederica
5500 block of Frederica Road (north end of island)

Ebo Landing
The general area of Ebo Landing, now on private property, can be seen from a distance—when traveling east on Sea Island Road, look north just before crossing the small bridge at Dunbar Creek.

Neptune Park
The park is on the south end of St. Simons Island, on your left at the end of Mallory Street.

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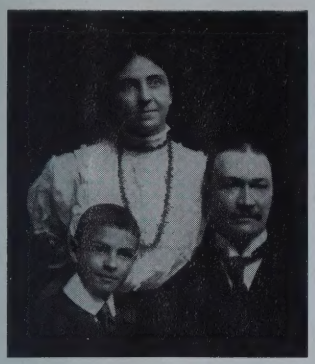

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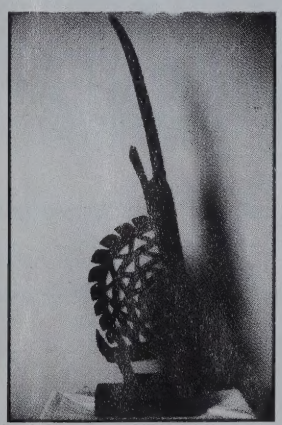

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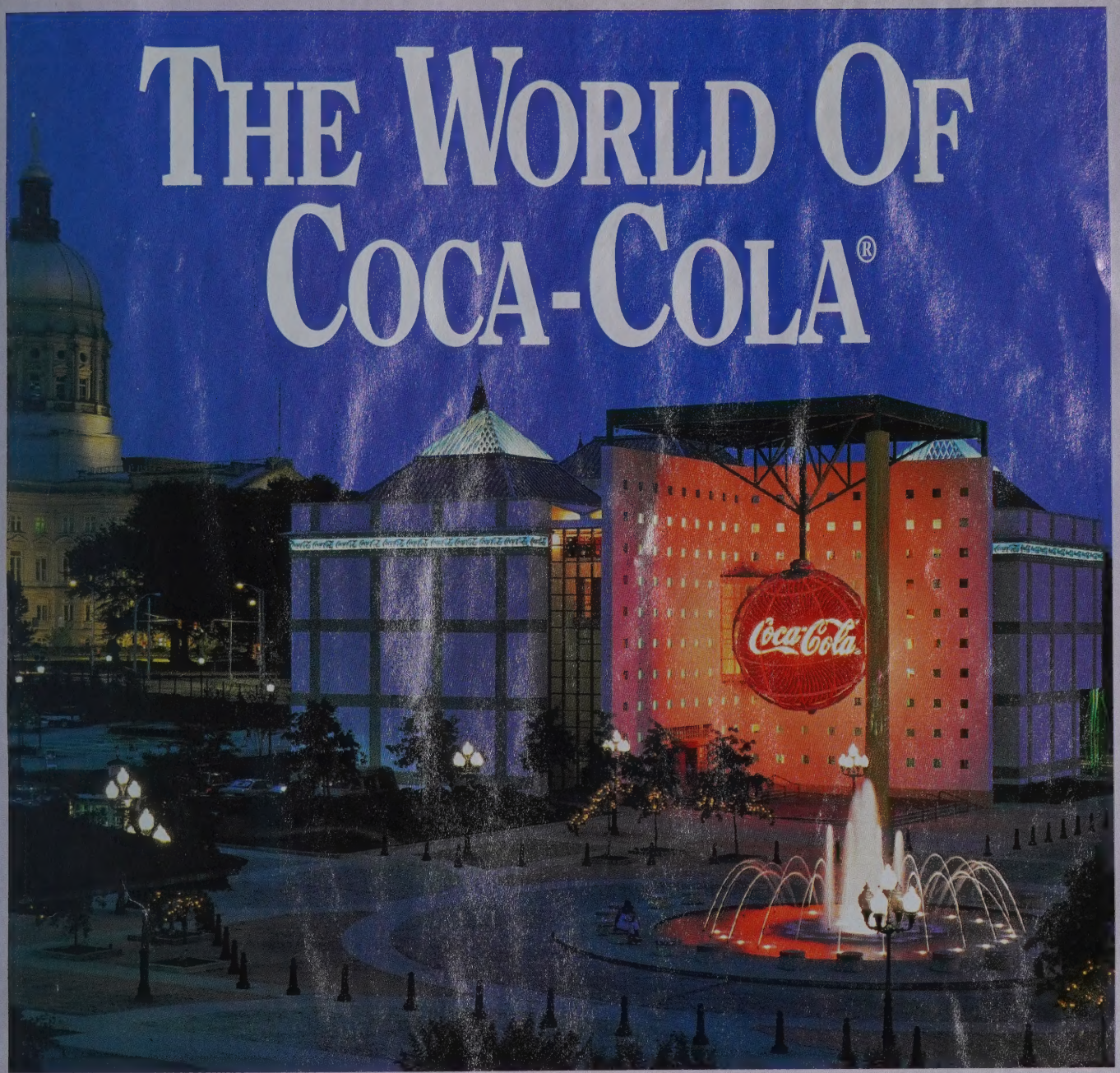

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